

Enrolling in TRS



The Teachers' Retirement System of the City of New York (TRS) is one of the largest pension systems in the United States, serving over 200,000 in-service members, retirees, and beneficiaries. This brochure describes eligibility for membership in TRS, guidelines for enrolling, and other key points for new and potential TRS members. There is also important information for those who have been members of another City or State retirement system.

BENEFITS OF TRS MEMBERSHIP

TRS membership provides a wide range of benefits, including the following:

- A guaranteed retirement allowance through our Qualified Pension Plan (QPP) upon meeting certain age and service requirements;
- The opportunity to set aside additional funds for retirement on a pre-tax basis by participating in our Tax-Deferred Annuity (TDA) Program;
- Loans from your QPP and TDA accounts after your first year of credited service or TDA participation, respectively;
- Disability retirement benefits upon meeting certain requirements; and
- Death benefits for your surviving beneficiaries.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TRS MEMBERSHIP

TRS membership is mandatory if you are:

- ✓ *A teacher or pedagogue* employed by the DOE or a participating Charter School.
- ✓ *A full-time instructional staff member* employed by CUNY, provided you are not a member of the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) offered by TIAA, or you do not join the ORP within 30 days of your appointment date. (Full-time CUNY substitute teachers have 30 days from their appointment date to join either TRS or TIAA. Employees working in substitute employment status have the option to become TRS members.)

- ✓ *A paraprofessional* (in the title of Auxiliary Trainer, Bilingual Professional Assistant, Educational Assistant, Educational Associate, or Teacher Aide) employed by the DOE or a participating Charter School. Before October 29, 2021, paraprofessionals had the option to become TRS members.

TRS membership is optional if you are:

- ✓ *An adjunct* employed by CUNY. (Please contact your Benefits Officer for a complete list of eligible CUNY titles.)

HOW TO ENROLL

- If your TRS membership is *mandatory*, you will be automatically enrolled in TRS, and do not need to submit an enrollment request.
- If your TRS membership is *optional* and you want to join TRS, you may do so by accessing our website.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Members must provide the following to TRS, even if they do not have to submit an online enrollment request:

Documentation	Method
Beneficiary designations under the QPP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure section of our website
Information about membership in a public retirement system within New York State or in TIAA (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure section of our website; or Paper “Membership in Other Retirement Systems” form (code EN10ret)
Information about previous work for a public employer within New York State (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Record of Prior Service” e-form (code SB146) in secure section of our website
Information about military service (if applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper “Military Service Credit Request Form” (code SD68)
Proof of date of birth (see below for more details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure section of our website; or Paper documentation

TRS cannot process any withdrawal-related requests (e.g., loans) or calculate your retirement benefits if we do not have proof of your date of birth. The following items are considered acceptable documentation:*

Number of Items	Documentation
Only ONE of the following is necessary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birth certificate; Passport; or Naturalization document
If none of the above is available, then TWO of the following items are required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driver’s license; Certificate of military record; Form SSA-2458 (Report of Confidential Social Security Benefit Information); or Other government-issued identification

* Any date-of-birth documentation in a language other than English must be accompanied by a translation. Photocopies of all documents are acceptable.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE QPP

TRS members make pension contributions representing a percentage of their wages. Pension contributions are automatically deducted from your pay; they earn 5% interest and are federally tax-deferred. These contributions are due beginning on your membership date. If payroll deductions do not begin immediately, TRS would notify you of any required contributions that you may owe.

The table below provides the contribution rates for members in Tier VI (the tier assigned to new members).

Salary	Contribution Rate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$45,000 or less More than \$45,000 to \$55,000 More than \$55,000 to \$75,000 More than \$75,000 to \$100,000 More than \$100,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.00% 3.50% 4.50% 5.75% 6.00%

TRS TIERS AND MEMBERSHIP DATE

Currently, all TRS members belong to one of five tiers, generally depending on the date they last became TRS members; benefits vary by tier. Members who last joined TRS after March 31, 2012 belong to Tier VI. (Please see the TRS publication *Benefits in Brief for Tier VI Members*.)

If your TRS membership is *mandatory*, then your membership date is the date of your appointment.

If your TRS membership is *optional*, then your membership date is the date TRS receives your online enrollment application.

Note: Your membership date may actually be a different date than described above if:

- a) you become “reinstated” to a prior membership with an eligible retirement system, or
- b) you are transferring a current membership in an eligible retirement system to TRS.

If you are a current or former member of a public retirement system within New York State, please read the following information carefully. (Please see the TRS publication *Benefits in Brief for Tier VI Members*.)

MEMBERSHIP/TIER REINSTATEMENT

If you are a former member of TRS or any other New York City or New York State public retirement system, you may apply for reinstatement to your previous membership date and tier after establishing your new TRS membership. To effect a reinstatement, you must repay any contributions refunded to you when your previous membership(s) ceased, plus applicable interest. Your date of membership in TRS would be deemed to be the date of membership in your previous retirement system. If that membership was based on a different tier, you may also be reinstated to that tier.

MEMBERSHIP TRANSFER

In-Service Members of Other Retirement Systems

You may transfer a current membership in one of the following eligible retirement systems to TRS:

- New York City Board of Education Retirement System (BERS)
- New York City Employees’ Retirement System (NYCERS)
- New York State Teachers’ Retirement System (NYSTRS)
- New York State and Local Employees’ Retirement System (NYSLERS)

To initiate a membership transfer, you must first become a TRS member. If your membership is *mandatory*, you will be enrolled in TRS automatically. If your membership is *optional*, you may enroll in TRS. In either case, you should then notify your current retirement system of your intent to transfer. That system is responsible for transferring your service credit and pension accumulations to TRS.

You will initially be placed in the tier in effect as of your TRS membership date. Once the transfer is complete, TRS will adjust your tier accordingly.

Retired Members of Other Retirement Systems

If you have retired from one of the retirement systems listed below and are now working in a position that entitles you to membership in TRS, you may transfer your membership to TRS only under certain conditions, as stated below:

<p>NYCERS or BERS (Tiers I and II only)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have not yet received a retirement allowance payment from the other retirement system or you are on deferred payability, your retirement application from your prior system would be considered withdrawn. Following your membership transfer, you would have no minimum service requirement before becoming eligible for a (potentially higher) TRS retirement benefit. • If you have already received a retirement allowance payment from your other system, you must first suspend your retirement allowance from that system. In addition, you must repay your other system any retirement allowance payment(s) that you have received. Your membership transfer would be permitted after the repayment is verified by TRS. <p>The tier you held in your previous retirement system would normally transfer to TRS with your membership. However, you would be enrolled in the current TRS tier until the transfer process is completed. TRS would make any necessary adjustments to your tier after your transfer is completed.</p>
<p>NYSTRS or NYSLERS or New York State and Local Police and Fire Retirement System (All Tiers)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must suspend your retirement allowance from the other retirement system and provide documentation to TRS with your enrollment application confirming the suspension before you can be granted TRS membership. • You may not transfer your membership to TRS; instead, you would maintain the two memberships separately. <p>If you later choose to reinstate your retirement allowance with the other system, you must notify TRS immediately. In such a case, you would be unable to receive any additional service credit from TRS, and your TRS membership rights may be affected.</p> <p>If you retire from your new position after you have attained vested rights with TRS, you may be eligible to receive a retirement allowance from both your other retirement system and TRS, depending on your tier.</p>

Retired members of the following retirement systems may **not** transfer their membership to TRS:

- NYCERS (Tiers III, IV, and VI)
- BERS (Tiers III, IV, and VI)
- New York City Fire Department Pension Fund
- New York City Police Pension Fund

If TRS pension contributions are being deducted from your paycheck, please advise TRS immediately so that we may stop and refund the erroneous contributions. You may retain your current retirement allowance and work in public employment within New York State according to the provisions of Section 212 of the Retirement and Social Security Law (RSSL). For further information, please refer to TRS' *Earnings After Retirement* brochure.

For your convenience, TRS forms and publications are available on our website.
If you require additional assistance, please contact our Member Services Center at 1 (888) 8-NYC-TRS.

*This publication should not be solely relied upon, as it is based on currently available information that is subject to change.
In all cases, the specific provisions of the governing laws, rules, and regulations prevail.*



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